

Thank you all very much for giving your time to your country in this manner. We are very, very grateful to you. And may God bless our country. Thank you so much.

Note: The President spoke at 1:30 p.m. in the Independence "A" Ballroom of the Grand

Hyatt Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Roy Romer of Colorado, chairman of the panel; Secretary of Education Lamar Alexander; and Gov. Carroll A. Campbell, Jr., of South Carolina, a member of the panel.

Remarks to Education Leaders

June 3, 1991

This is what we call in the White House a cameo appearance—in, out. [Laughter] But we have our new Deputy Secretary, number two in the Department, David Kearns here. I want to tell you something about him. He was the former chief executive of Xerox, and he comes to this big job, but with a total dedication and commitment to education. And I think it says a wonderful thing to our country that a man with his extraordinary business achievements—all the time, incidentally, when he was in that job he was constructively engaged in helping our schools and helping education. But here he is now working hand-in-hand with our very able Secretary, who all of you know and to whom I just once again express my real appreciation for the job he and this fantastic team we've got over there at the Department is doing.

I'm not here, though, to talk about what the center can do for the people. That's not the way we're going to reform education in this country. What I want to do is talk about or just thank you for what you are doing and what we're counting on you to do as we reach out to achieve our national education goals, goals that were established in a totally nonpartisan way by the Governors, unanimously adopted by the Governors.

Governor Romer was going to come on over here today, Governor Campbell with him on our education panels of the Governors' Association. But they've actively involved in another meeting which the three of us attended not so many minutes ago. And I say that because they wanted to be here, too. But we're grateful to Governor Romer of Colorado, Governor Carroll

Campbell and the others that are participating on the Governors panel.

Lamar and I were talking. He said, well, look, remind these people that they're the ones that stand at the center of this crusade to reform the American schools and to reach the six national goals that you all are familiar with, and reach them by the year 2000. It's a strong agenda, a tough agenda in some ways. But all of us are determined that, with your help, we can do it.

So, what we talk about in the America 2000 strategy, you put into action. And the ideas for implementing a lot of our strategy has got to come from you all and thousands like you across this country. It can't succeed—we cannot dictate from Washington. I am not anti-Washington. I am not antibureaucracy. We've got some wonderful people who have given their lives in these Departments, but this program, America 2000, cannot succeed if we try to do it from Washington itself.

And so, we've got to spread the message. And along those lines I'm going over to Delaware next week—I think with Lamar, I hope—to attend a graduation for graduates of an adult education program. One of our goals, as you know, is you're never too old to stop learning. And by going there we hope that this will put some focus on the program—many of you are already involved in that kind of education—give a boost to what you're doing and maybe in the process get some good ideas as to how we can do it better.

Then the following week, I go by to Colorado and see Governor Romer, who's our chairman really of the Governors on this, in

the education field, talking about the role of community in education. Once again, community in education, because we simply—dedicated though I know our people are here—can't get it done without a sense of community. Governor Romer and his colleagues in the Colorado 2000 effort are going to hold meetings in 176 locations across the State in a single night. I don't think he'll be at all of them, but nevertheless—[laughter]—he's a good man, but not that good.

And that's an impressive effort. I cite it because it builds on this theme of participation that is absolutely essential. And we hope that kind of thing will happen all across the country. And so, we've urged all cities and States to take a few simple, commonsense steps to get the reform going in whatever way they feel they can be most effective. First, they have to adopt the goals for themselves, the national education goals. And as some of you know, there may be resistance here and there. But look at them carefully, put them all together, and I think you'll think it's the right approach or the right program for the country.

And the approaches, they may well vary. They have to adopt these goals. They've got to devise a communitywide strategy to meet them, develop a report card system to assess progress towards the goals, and then be willing to create and support a new school.

One of the aspects of this that Lamar has me fired up the most about is citizens and communities starting from scratch—and we haven't done it well enough yet—and creating new schools. And hopefully we'll be able, with the effort of David and Lamar, to supplement those efforts with some funds to get these things going in the different States.

But it's a wonderful concept. And some may need longer school terms. Some may want to have varied hours. Some may want different curricula—whatever it is. But that's the genius of it, the diversity of it. And I think it's an exciting project.

I think you can stimulate the kinds of local activities that you need, that we need, and I know you will. So, I really want to say thanks. Lamar told me you all are dis-

proportionately involved for American citizens, so in some ways I'm singing and preaching to the choir. But the choir can get out there and get others in phase and get them creating.

And of all the things that we're trying to do—we're trying to clean up the streets and help with the neighborhoods, and Barbara and I are trying to at least in some tiny way say how important we think family is. And we're trying to deal with the Soviet Union, and all of these things that you have the privilege of doing as President. But there's nothing that I feel more excited about or whose importance I think is priority than this program of America 2000.

So, I've told the Secretary that I want to help in every way possible. And I mean it. And Barbara has already, in my view, set a pretty good example in her own way in terms of reading and the emphasis on that, and helping kids. But she's a Point of Light. You all are Points of Light. And we're going to do what we should do in terms of legislation and all of that, but I need your help. The country needs your help—your leaders. And I'm very grateful to those of you who are already out there doing the Lord's work in helping these young kids of ours. Thank you very, very much.

In order to feel that you're never too old to learn, I'm going off to a lecture on Andrew Jackson's Presidency. And I expect I'll be better informed when I finish. But I will now turn this podium over to Lamar and to David. And again, with my sincere thanks to all of you, thank you very much.

Note: The President spoke at 4:45 p.m. in the Indian Treaty Room of the Old Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to David T. Kearns, Deputy Secretary of Education; Gov. Roy Romer of Colorado, chairman of the National Education Goals Panel; Gov. Carroll A. Campbell, Jr., of South Carolina; and Secretary of Education Lamar Alexander.